

How May Women Offer Prayers



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English Translation

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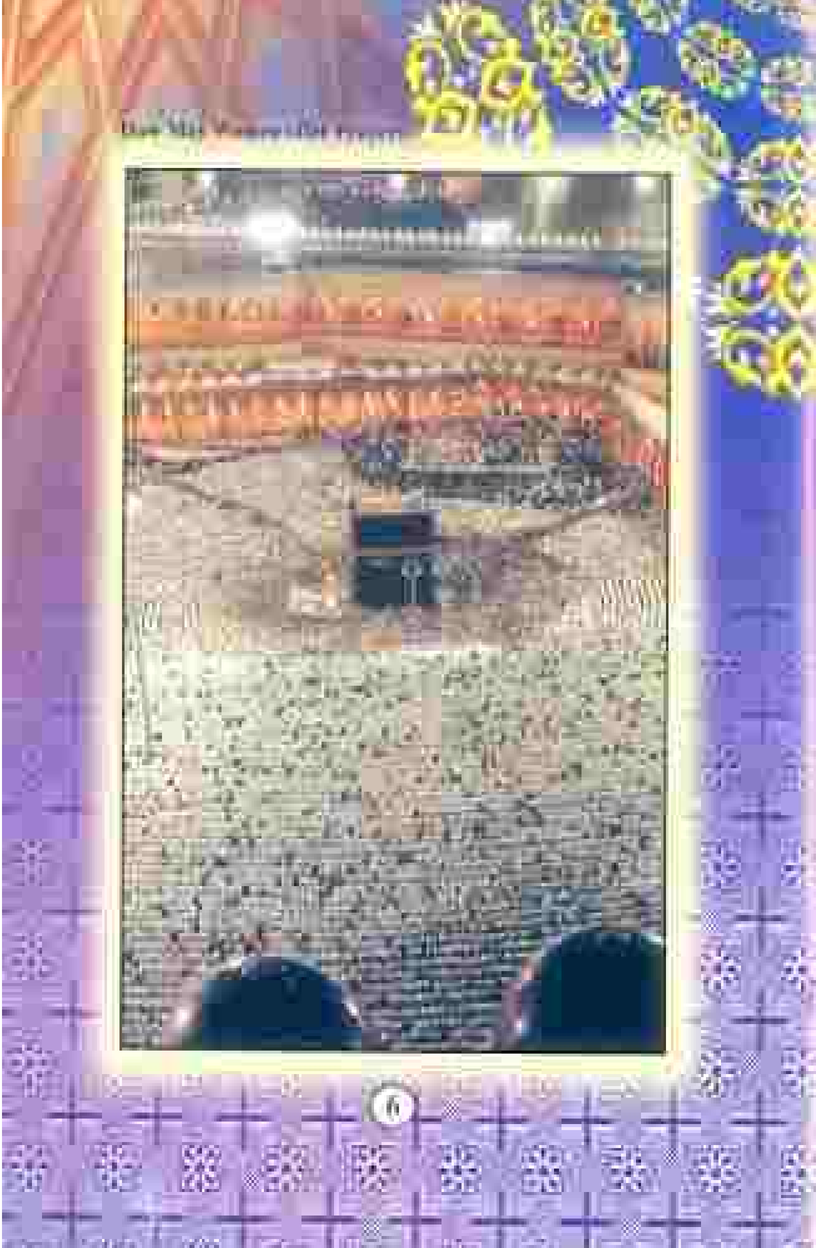
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In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

CONFIRMATION

We praise Allah and invoke blessings on His Messenger.

I have gone through the booklet *Khawateen Ka Tareeqah Namaz* by Mufti Ibn Abdur Rauf. By the Grace of Allah, the author has described the method of prayer by women in detail. We generally get books on the method in which men may pray but we do not find the method which women may employ in offering prescribed prayers. Thus, this piece of work is very useful. It is also very reliable. Now, women must consult it and correct their prayers accordingly so that they follow the directions of the Prophet.

In this regard and gain approval.

May Allah grant approval to the efforts of the author and may this book be beneficial,

Maulana Subhan Mahmood

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

نحمده ونصلي على رسوله الكريم

A WORD FROM THE AUTHOR

We praise Allah and invoke blessings on His Messenger, Muhammad, and his family and companions – all of them.

As-salah, or the prescribed prayers, is a very significant form of worship. Every Muslim must offer it correctly according to *Sunnah*. However, we ignore the *Sunnah* as a result of which we miss the blessings of the prayers. The common people – particularly the women – are not even aware of the method of offering the prayers as taught by the Prophet ﷺ. If we pay a little attention and learn the correct method, we will offer our prayers according to *Sunnah* and it will take us no more time than it does.

properly. Rather, it will be easier and fetch us more reward too. Therefore, on the request of Maulvi Ikhlas Ahmad, I present here some selected Ahadith concerning prescribed prayers and the method for women of offering the prayers. May Allah make it beneficial for all of us and guide us to correct our prayers accordingly.

Abdur Rauf Sakharvi

Translator's Note: The word PRAYER is used in the text to refer to as-*Salah* or Namaz, the act of devotion. For prayer to Allah in the sense of to supplicate the word supplication is used.

OBEDIENCE AND LOVE

Allah, the Exalted, has said:

وَمَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانتَهُوا

وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ

wa mā ā-tā-ku-mur-ra-su-lu fa-khu-ḏū-hu wa mā na-hā-kum 'an-hu fan-ta-hū wat-ta-qul-lāh in-nal-lā-ha sha-dī-dul 'i-qāb

And whatsoever the Messenger gives you, take it, and whatsoever he forbids, abstain (there from); and fear Allah. Surely Allah is severe in retribution.

[illegible]

He has also said:

قل إن كنتم تحبون الله فاتبعوني

qul in kun-tum tu-hib-b ū-nal-lā-ha fat-ta-bi-'ū-nī yuh-bib-ku-mul-lā-hu wa-yag-fir la-kum zu-nū ba-kum wal-lā-hu ga-fū-rur-ra-hīm

Say (O Prophet): "If you love Allah then follow me. Allah will love you, and forgive your sins. And Allah is Forgiving Merciful."

The first verse tells us that it is necessary to obey the Messenger of Allah. The second verse makes it clear that one can find the love of Allah only in obedience to the Prophet. Thus, our salvation and success lies in obeying the Messenger of Allah. We find in one Hadith:

"All my followers will enter Paradise except those who deny." He was asked.

"Messenger of Allah, who will deny?" He said, "Whoever obeyed me will go to Paradise and he who disobeys me has (actually) denied."

The Prophet has also said:

"None of you can be a Muslim unless his personal wishes are subservient to the demands of this religion that I have brought."

The Holy Prophet has given a very emphatic command for prayers to the Muslims. Those who observe it are given very glad tidings and those who neglect it are warned of a terrible torment.

Let us, therefore, read the verses of the Qur'an, and the Ahadith about prayers and obey them to attain success.

Good Tidings: Sins are Forgiven

Hazrat Abu Zarr said that once the Prophet came out into the open during winter. Leaves were being shed by the trees. He held the branch of a tree so that it shed more leaves. He said, "Abu Zarr! When a Muslim offers prayers sincerely for Allah, his sins fall down from him just as these leaves fall down the tree."

Hazrat Abu Zarr said that the Holy Prophet said, "Tell me if a river flows by the door of a person who bathes in it five times daily will he have any dirt on him any more?" The Companions said that he will have nothing on him of dirt. The Prophet said, "It is the same thing with the five prayers. Allah removes a man's sins if he observes them."

Abu Muslim says that he presented himself before Abu Umamah while he

was in the mosque and asked him about the Hadith reported on his authority. "When a person performs ablution very carefully before offering his *fard* (obligatory) prayers, Allah forgives him all his sins that he may have committed that day while walking, the sins he may have committed by his hands, that he may have committed by his ears, that he may have committed by his eyes, that may have arisen in his heart." Hazrat Abu Umamah confirmed that he had heard these words from the Prophet ﷺ many times.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "When the time of prayers approaches, an angel announces: O son of Adam arise and extinguish the fire of hell that you have lit to burn you (through your sins). Thus the religious minded get up and perform ablution and offer the zuhr prayers. Because of this their sins (from morning to afternoon)

are forgiven. In the same way at the time of *Asr* and *Maghrib* and *'Isha*. (In short, at every prayer this happens.) People sleep after *'Isha*. Then, some people turn to evil deeds under the cover of darkness and some towards virtue."

According to Hazrat Uthman [illegible] the Messenger of Allah [illegible] said, "When, at the approach of the hour of the obligatory prayer, a Muslim performs ablution well and prays with humility paying attention to the bowing and prostration postures, then the prayer serves as an atonement for his previous sins until he commits a major sin. The blessing of the prayer will remain with him for ever." (Muslim)

Conclusion:

These Ahadith make it clear that prayer is such an auspicious deed that paves

the way for sins to be pardoned and the filth through them to be washed. However, this is subject to the condition that the person has not committed a major sin. The major sins can only be forgiven through repentance. However, if He chooses Allah may forgive him of His own accord. On our part, we may observe prayers because they are a significant means to gaining forgiveness.

Admittance to Paradise Before The Martyr

According to Hazrat Abu Hurayrah: Two men of a tribe embraced Islam at the same time. One of them was martyred in Jihad while the other died a year later. I saw in my dream that the second person entered Paradise before the martyr. I was surprised because a martyr enjoys a very high rank and should have gone to Paradise ahead of the

otherwise. I said this to the Prophet myself or someone else did so until he explained to us, "Didn't you see the pious deeds of the one who died later? How many good deeds were added to his record during this period. He also fasted a month more than the martyr and had over six thousand rak'at of prayers more".

Assurance of Admittance to Paradise

The Prophet reported the saying of Allah: "I have prescribed the five times prayers and I have bound myself to admit to Paradise anyone who is particular in offering them at their appointed time. As for those who do not observe them, I am not responsible for them in anyway."

Promise of Paradise on Offering Prayers

Hazrat Uqbah Bin 'Amir quotes

the Messenger of Allah as saying: "If anyone performs ablution then stands before Allah and offers two raka'at of prayer with full attention and heart, then Paradise is surely written for him."

Conclusion:

These Ahadith teach us that observing prayers and adherence to sunnah is surety to gain entry to Paradise. We must observe these.

EMPHASIS ON PRAYERS

Prayers Should Not Be Neglected Even If One Is Cut To Pieces

Hazrat 'Ubadah says that his beloved Prophet gave him seven advices four of which are: (1) Do not associate anyone with Allah even if you are cut to pieces, or burnt down, or put to the gallows,

(ii) Do not neglect prayers intentionally. He who gives up prayers wilfully ceases to be on religion. (iii) Do not disobey Allah because it displeases Him. (iv) Do not drink wine because it is the root of all evil.

The Great Excellence of Prayers

According to a Companion when Khaybar was conquered, men looked at their booties. These contained different items as also prisoners of war. They sat down to exchange their possessions. One of the Companions remarked to the Prophet: "Messenger of Allah! Today, I have gained through this bartering more than anyone else in this company." "How much have you earned?" asked the Prophet. He replied, "I went on buying and selling and I earned three hundred *uqiyas*."[1] The Prophet said "Shall I show you something more beneficial?"

He requested that he be shown that and the Prophet said:

[illegible]

"Two rak'at optional prayers after the obligatory prayers." (Abu Dawood)

Missing Prayers is the Same as Having One's Home Plundered

The Prophet said: "If anyone misses even one prayer it is like he has his family and possessions snatched from him."

Do Not Procrastinate in Doing Three Things

Hazrat Ali said that the Prophet said, "Do not delay in doing three things. One, prayers when its time is up. Second, the funeral when it is ready. Third, an unmarried girl when a match is found for her (should be married to him)." (At-Tirmidhi)

TEN ADVICES

Hazrat Mu'az said that the Holy Prophet gave him ten advices.

(i) Do not associate anyone with Allah even if you are killed or burnt.

(ii) Do not disobey parents even if they ask you to divorce your wife or spend all your wealth.

(iii) Do not miss any obligatory prayer wilfully; if anyone does neglect an obligatory prayer wilfully Allah does not remain responsible for him.

(iv) Do not drink wine. It is the root of evil and vulgarity.

(v) Do not disobey Allah because it incurs His wrath.

(vi) Do not desert while fighting even if all companions are killed.

(vii) If epidemic spreads anywhere do not flee that place (even if it is plague).

(viii) Spend on the people of your house.

(ix) Do not spare the rod over them as a means of warning.

(x) Keep the fear of Allah alive in them.

The Final Advice of The Prophet ﷺ

According to Hazrat Umm Salamah when in the final moments of his life the Prophet ﷺ could not speak the words distinctly even then he stressed on prayer and the rights of slaves. Hazrat Ali has also reported the same thing that the last words of the Prophet ﷺ laid emphasis on prayer and urged one to fear Allah

concerning slaves.

Conclusion:

In the light of stress on prayers laid in the Ahadith, we must be particular in observing them at the correct appointed time.

Warning And Punishment To Neglect Prayers Is Like Disbelief

The Holy Prophet said that neglect of prayers classifies one among the unbelievers. He has also said that it is only neglect of prayer that brackets together a person and disbelief. He has also said that the difference between faith and disbelief is neglect of prayers.

One Who Does Not Pray Will Be Ranked With the Unbelievers

According to Hazrat Ibn Umar [illegible] the Prophet [illegible] once touched the subject of prayers and said, "Whoever is regular in offering prayers, his prayers will be noor (light) for him on the Day of Resurrection, and an advocate at the time of reckoning and a means of deliverance. As for him who is not particular with prayers, he will not have the light on the Day of Resurrection and he will neither have anyone to speak for him nor rescue him; he will be grouped with Pharaoh, Haman, and Ubayy bin Khalaf [illegible]

Neglect of Obligatory Prayers Calls for Head to Be Smashed

Hazrat Samurah bin Jundub [illegible] has narrated that it was the practice of the

Prophet ﷺ would ask his Companions (after the *Fajr* prayer) if any of them had seen a dream. If anyone had seen it, he would narrate it and the Prophet ﷺ would interpret it. One day after putting the question as usual, the Prophet ﷺ narrated the dream he had seen himself. "Two persons came to me and took me along with them..." It was a long dream in which he saw Paradise and Hell where people were punished in different ways. One man was having his head crushed with a stone. The stone was hit on the head with such a force that it would rebound and fall at a distance. This man was then raised up and his head would regain its original state. He was then treated in the same way again. The Prophet ﷺ asked his two escorts about this. They explained that the man had read the Qur'an but given it up and he would go to sleep

without offering his prayers.

Twenty Eight Million Eight Hundred Thousand Years in Hell

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said that if anyone misses a prayer then, even if he redeems it, he will burn in Hell for the period of a *Huqub* for not offering the prayers on time. an *Huqub* will be equal to eighty years in the Hereafter, each year of three hundred and sixty days. According to our reckoning one day will be as long as a thousand years. (So thus an *Huqub* comes to 28,800,000.)

FIVE GIFTS TO ONE WHO PRAYS

According to a Hadith, Allah honours the person who is regular in offering his prayers in five ways.

(i) His provision is not restricted.

(ii) He is not punished in the grave.

(iii) On the Day of Resurrection, his Record of Deeds will be placed in his right hand. (This has been discussed in detail in the *surah al-Haqqah* no-69 of the Qur'an). Those whose Record will be given in their right hands will display it to everyone very happily.

(iv) He will pass over the bridge *sirat* swiftly.

(v) He will be safe from reckoning.

Punishment Of Fifteen Types To One Who Neglects Prayers

One who is lethargic in offering prayers receives fifteen punishments: five of them in this life, three at the time of death,

those in the grave and those when he emerges from it.

FIVE PUNISHMENTS IN THIS LIFE

(i) His life lacks blessing.

(ii) The Light (noor) of the righteous is missing from his face.

(iii) He is not rewarded for his good deeds.

(iv) His supplications go unapproved.

(v) He does not have a right in the supplications of the pious people.

Three Punishments At The Time Of Death

(i) He dies dishonourably.

(ii) He dies in poverty and hunger.

(iii) He dies while his thirst is unquenched. (If he were to drink water as much as the ocean, he would yet be thirsty.)

Three Punishments in the Grave

(i) The grave narrows down on him so that his ribs are crushed together.

(ii) A fire burns in his grave.

(iii) A snake tackles him in the grave. Its eyes are of fire and its nails are of iron - so long that it would take a day to traverse them end to end. Its voice is thunderous. It will say, "My Lord has appointed me over you, that I may punish you till sunrise for neglecting the dawn prayer. Then, I may punish you till the afternoon for

neglecting the noon prayer. Then I may punish you till sunset for neglecting the afternoon prayer and till nightfall for neglecting the sunset prayer then I may punish you till dawn for the neglecting the night prayer. (These prayers are respectively: *Fajr, Zuhr, 'Asr, Maghrib* and *'Isha*.) When he hits him once, the dead man sinks into the earth upto seventy hands. This punishment continues until the Day of Resurrection.

Three Punishment on Revival and Emergence from the Grave

(i) The accounting will be severe.

(ii) Allah the Exalted will be angry with him.

(14) He will be sent to Hell

These add up to fourteen. May be the fifteenth has been left out by mistake.

In a version, we are told that three lines will be found inscribed on his face: O violator of the rights of Allah. O, the One associated with the wrath of Allah. Just as you violated the rights of Allah in the world so today you will be deprived of the mercy of Allah.

HUMILITY AND OBEISANCE

Humility and attention are very important in prayers. Without these, prayers are not accepted. It is to concentrate towards Allah and pay attention to the words or their meanings recited in prayer. One must not intentionally think of other things while engaged in prayer. However, any

unintentional diversion is excused and does not reduce the worthiness of the prayer. Further, humility and obeisance calls upon one to go through the postures with composure and due attention without haste. Let us now see some Ahadith on this point.

Blessings and Curses of Prayers

Hazrat Anas reports the Prophet as saying, "When a person offers his prayers at the appointed time, having performed ablution well, observing humility and proper attention in his prayers, standing with dignity, going through the bowing and prostration calmly - in short, doing everything well - then his prayers get a very radiant form and make an application for him: May Allah preserve you in the same manner as you have preserved me. As for him who offers his prayers hastily

disregarding its time, hurrying through ablution, the bowing and prostration postures, the prayers form an ugly dark appearance and curse him: May Allah destroy you just as you have wasted me. The prayers are then wrapped up like old clothing and flung at the face of this man."

PEACE IN PRAYERS

Hazrat Umm Rumah, the mother of Hazrat Aishah said that while she was offering her prayers once she rocked herself hither and thither. Hazrat Abu Bakr saw her and scolded her so severely that she almost came out of her prayers. He then said that he had heard the Prophet say: "Let one who stands up to pray keep still and not shake his body. To keep one's body still is part of correct prayer."

SAFETY FROM PUNISHMENT

Hazrat Ubadah has said that the Holy Prophet said, "One who appears on the Day of Resurrection with all the five prayers performed punctually, with correct ablution, his prayers offered with humility and dedication, Allah has promised that he will not be punished. But there is no assurance for one who does not appear with such prayers. Allah may forgive him through His Mercy or punish him."

WORST OF THE THIEVES

Hazrat Abu Qatadah has narrated that the Prophet said, "The worst of the thieves is he who steals from prayers too." The Companions asked him, "Messenger of Allah! How will he do that?" The Prophet said that he will not perform the postures of bowing and prostration correctly.

HUMILITY WILL DISAPPEAR

According to Hazrat Abu ad-Darda' ; the Prophet ( ) said that before everything humility in prayers will be removed from this people. "You will see that (in the whole mosque) not even one person will offer his prayers with humility." The forgoing Ahadith make it very clear that one must offer prayers regularly and in a perfect manner with humility.

Now, read on the correct method and correct your prayers accordingly. It is the responsibility of the parents that they correct their own prayers and rectify their daughter's prayers too and keep examining their prayers now and then.

Proof of (Different) Method of Prayer for Women

Before the method of prayer for women is discussed let us see a question in this regard and its answer. This is done because often the Ahl-Hadith tell Muslims especially the women that there is no difference between the method of prayers of men and women. Thus women offer prayers in the manner of men. This is simply because they are unaware. After the detailed clarification that follows, these women must obey the Ahādīth and accept the truth. The women of the Hanafi school of thought must be confident that their method is very correct and according to *Sharī'ah*. The Question and Answer follow.

Question:

What do the Ulama say about the Hanafi woman whose Ahl-Hadith husband

asks her to offer prayers in the manner of men because it cannot be proved that the method for women is different from men's method. Now, tell us if the woman must offer her prayers in the manner of men and if she must obey her husband in this regard.

Is it proved through Ahadith that the method of praying is different for men and women? Please give a detailed and well-grounded reply. May Allah reward you.

Abdul Hakeem

The Answer:

Praise be to Allah and His blessings on the Holy Prophet.

In the related circumstances, it is not permissible for the Ahl-Hadith husband to compel his wife to pray in the fashion of

men because the method of prayer of women is not specifically proved through any Hadith to be the same as that of men. Rather the difference in the method for men and women is proved through many Ahadith, examples of the Companions and their successors and the four Imams of jurisprudence - Imam Abu Hanifah, Imam Malik, Imam Shafai, Imam Ahmad are unanimous about it.

(1) Hazrat Ibn Umar was asked how did women pray in the times of the Messenger of Allah . He said that they used to sit cross-legged (or, on their knees) but were then commanded to draw within themselves (that is, to contract) while

praying.

[illegible]

(vi) Hazrat Wa'il bin Hajr said that the Messenger of Allah said to him, "O Wa'il bin Hajr, when you begin your prayers raise your hands to your ears and women must raise their hands to their chests."

etc.

[illegible]

(vii) When the Messenger of Allah passed by two women who were praying, he said to them when you prostrate let part of your body remain

on the ground because a woman is not like a man in this regard.

[illegible]

([illegible]) Hazrat Abdullah Ibn Umar said that the Messenger of Allah said, "When a woman sits during prayer she must place one of her thighs over the other and when she prostrates, she must place her stomach on her thighs in such a way that she conceals most of herself. Allah looks at her and tells the angels that they should bear witness that He has forgiven her."

[illegible]

(V) The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said that: (If something happens during prayer) men may recite the *tasbih* (*subhan Allah*) and women may clap their hands.

[illegible]

(VI) Hazrat Abu Bakr bin Abu Shaibah said that he heard Hazrat Ata say when he was asked how may women raise their hands in prayer: "Upto their chests. They may not raise them in the manner of men." While showing this he kept his hands very drawn and joined them well. He said, "The method of a woman's prayer is not akin to man's."

[illegible]

(10) Hazrat Ali has reported that when she prostrates a woman must sit on her hips and keep her thighs together.

[illegible]

[illegible]

When Hazrat Abd Allah was asked about the method of woman's prayers, he said that she may keep together (all her body) and sit on her hips.

These Ahadith and traditions of the Companions and their successors amply prove that the method of prayers for women is quite different. We now see the point of view of the jurists in this regard.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

The Ahādīth, the opinion of the Companions and successors and the jurists of the four schools of thought prove that the masnun method of prayer for women is different from that for men. The women's method calls for observing the veil to a maximum extent and keeping the body well contracted and together. This method was observed in the times of the Prophet (ﷺ) and is being observed since then to this day. We have not found any ruling from any Companion, successor or any other jurist suggesting that the methods for men and women are identical. Further, the Ulama of Ahl-Hadith themselves have been giving rulings based on the foregoing Ahadith. Thus, Maulana Abdul Jabbar bin Abdullah Ghaznavi (grandfather of the founder of

Jami' Abu Bakr Gulshan-e-Iqbal Karachi has said about the Ahadith from Kanzul Ummal and Bayhaqi that we have reproduced:

"The Ahl Sunnat and the four schools and others have been observing it all along."

Then after citing from the works of the four schools of thought, he draws this conclusion:

"In short, the collecting or gathering together (the body) of the woman and the contraction of her (body) is proved through the Ahadith and practice of the scholars of the four schools of thought and others besides them. Anyone who denies it is ignorant of the Books of Hadith and practice of the scholars."

And Allah knows the best

Abdul Jabbar (may Allah forgive

[illegible]

The Ahl-Hadith have nothing to substantiate their claim either from the Qur'an and Hadith or from the rulings of the Khalifahs, the Khulafa Rashidin. If they cite the tradition of Hazrat Umm Darda then it is not correct to conclude from it, for many reasons. The tradition is

عن مكحول ان ام الدرداء كانت تجلس في صلاتها جلسة الرجل

Hazrat Umm Darda was sitting like men in her prayers. [illegible]

The reasons for not drawing on this tradition are:

(1) Although Hafiz Mazi [illegible] has called her a Companion, the other scholars of Hadith have said that she was a successor. Even if a successor's

practice is according to sunnah; one cannot draw conclusions from him.

[illegible]

(3) Even if she is regarded as a companion, this act is her personal one. Neither did she invited anyone else to follow her nor did she cite any saying or deed of the Prophet ﷺ in support of her practice. She did not even cite a ruling of any of the Khulafa Rashid'in. The continued practice of women in regard to their prayers cannot be neglected in the face of this single instance of an individual. It is just like adopting a rare Qira'at (form of recital of the Qur'an) in preference to a common, known continuous one.

(7) If we consider the words, the general opinion is upheld rather than rejected. The words are that *she was sitting like men in her prayers* and thus it may not have been a common practice. Other women were not doing so therefore she is singled out.

If anyone raises the question, "Why has Imam Bukhari mentioned it in his Sahih Bukhari if this tradition is not authentic?" then this doubt is not strong. Imam Bukhari has mentioned it in describing the sitting posture of men not to show that women's posture was the same as men's. Thus Hafiz Ibn Hajar writes in Fath ul Bari:

[illegible]

Again, it is wrong to cite the words

of the Prophet : "Pray as you see me pray" to say that women must pray as men do. These words were spoken at a particular time when a delegation had come to the Prophet and stayed there for twenty days. When they were departing, the Prophet gave them some advice and this was an advice too, "Pray as you see me pray."

If we consider these words as a general command not associated with the circumstances mentioned, then certainly everyone of his followers, men and women, are required to imitate the Prophet . However, it must be understood that a command is considered general only so long as there is no *Shari'ah* argument against it excepting the action (sometimes) or some people. Thus, the weak and the ill are exempted through the Ahadith that allow them relief and women through the Ahadith

that require them to observe the veil and conceal their body. It is wrong, therefore, to draw conclusion from these words of the Prophet (ﷺ) [illegible] showing that the method of men's and women's prayers are different. [illegible] Ibn Hajar as-Shafi'i writes in Fath ul Bari

[illegible]

The conclusion drawn from the foregoing Ahadith and the explanation of the jurists is that it is correct for a woman to contract herself when prostrating and sitting

in prayer: to be particular about concealing her body and to place her hands on her chest. The prayer of a woman is different from that of man in all these aspects. This is correct and must be adopted.

The Method of Woman's Prayer

Remember these and act accordingly:

(i) You must face the *Qiblah*.

(ii) You must stand straight and your gaze must be towards the place of prostration. It is undesirable to lower the neck and let the chin touch the chest. It is also wrong to stand with the chest bent down unnecessarily. Stand with the gaze towards the place of prostration.

(iii) The toes should also be turned towards the *Qiblah* and the feet

should be straight towards the *Qiblah*. It is against sunnah to turn the feet right and left, while the toes must be directed towards *Qiblah*.

(iv) A space of at least four fingers must be kept between the feet. (Umdat al Ahkaam)

(v) Women must cover their entire body with a thick sheet of cloth so that the head, chest, neck, arms, shoulders, calf, etc. are all under it. If the face, feet and hands upto the joints are uncovered, the prayers will be valid because these three things are exempted from the veil, but if they are covered then too the prayers will be valid.

(vi) Prayers are invalid if a *dupatta* (head cover) is used that is thin and renders

visible the head, neck, throat, much of the portion below the throat, arms, elbows, wrists. Therefore, be particular to conceal the entire body while praying and use a thick sheet of cloth or chadar (dupatta) etc.

(vii) If one-fourth of any part of the body except the face, hands and feet become uncovered while praying for so long as takes to recite *sub-hā-nal-lāh* three times, the prayers will be invalid. However, if it remains uncovered for a shorter time the validity of prayers will not be affected but it is sinful.

(viii) It is *makrooh* (undesirable) to pray in such garments which one would not don before other people.

BEGINNING THE PRAYERS

(i) Form the intention to offer the prayers in your mind recollecting the nature and time of prayer. It is not necessary to repeat the intention orally with the tongue.

(ii) Raise both hands to the shoulders without removing them from the *dopatta* facing the palms towards the *Qiblah* and keeping the fingers straight up. Women must not raise their hands upto the ears.

(iii) Raising the hands in this manner, say 'Allahu Akbar.' Place the hands on the chest without forming a ring. Place the palm of the right hand on the back of the left. Women must not place their hands on the navel in the fashion of men.

THE STANDING POSTURE

1. When offering the prayer individually, begin the first rak'ah with recital of *Thana* ***sub-ha-na-kal-la hum-ma***, *ta'awwuz* and *tasmiyah*. Then recite the *surah al-Fatihah* at the end of which say *Aameen*. Then recite the *tasmiyah* and any *surah* or at least three short verses.

2. If by chance you are behind an Imam stay quiet after reciting the *Thana* and listen to the recital of the Imam attentively. If the Imam is not reciting aloud then concentrate on the *surah al-Fatiha* without moving your lips.

3. When reciting yourself, pause at every verse of *surah al-Fatiha*. Do

not recite several verses together in one breath. In the next recital more than one verse may be recited in one breath if you like. Women must recite all these - surah al-*Fatiha* and other verses etc. - in an inaudible voice.

4. Do not oscillate your body unnecessarily. The more stable and immobile you are the better. If it is necessary to scratch any part of your body use only one hand for the shortest possible time and if only very necessary.

5. It is against the manners of prayers to place all body weight on one foot and let a crease form on the other. Refrain from this posture. Either place equal balance on both feet or

put weight on one foot without curving the other.

6. Try your best to suppress yawning when the urge is there.

7. When in this standing posture keep your gaze on the place of prostration. Refrain from looking here and there.

THE BOWING POSTURE

When bowing be careful to observe these things:

(i) When moving over from the standing posture say 'Allahu Akbar' as you begin to bow so that you have said it when you are in the bowing position.

(ii) Women must bend just a little only reaching their hands to the knees. They must not bend fully as men do. (Shami)

(iii) Women must keep their fingers on the knees together with one another. They must not spread them to hold the knees as men do. They may bend their knees a little (forward) and keep their elbows attached to their sides [illegible]

(iv) Stay in the bowing posture at least as long as it takes to say *Sub-ḥā-na rab-bi-yal 'a-ẓīm.* (Glory be to my Lord, the Great)

(v) In the bowing posture the gaze must rest on the feet.

(vi) Weight must be placed equally on both feet and their ankles must be drawn close together.

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Getting up from the Bowing Posture

(i) On getting up from the bowing posture, stand erect keeping the body absolutely straight.

(ii) The gaze must rest at the place of prostration.

(iii) Some women just symbolise the getting up from the bowing posture and go down straight into prostration. It is obligatory for them to repeat their prayers. Avoid doing this and do not go into prostration until you are convinced well that your body is straight.

When Going To The Prostration Posture

Be careful to observe these things while going into the prostration posture:

(i) Women must bend their body from the chest while going down. They must first place their knees on the ground, then their hands followed by the nose and forehead.

(ii) Women must contract themselves while prostrating. They must crouch in such a manner that the belly and the thighs are close together. The arms must also be touching the sides. Instead of keeping the feet raised they must be placed down to the right side. As far as possible, the toes must be turned towards the *Qiblah*.

(iii) Women must place their arms including the elbows entirely on the floor.

(iv) So much time must be spent in prostration as takes to recite

sub-ḥāna rab-bi-yal 'a-la (Glory to be my Lord, the High) at least three times. It is disallowed to raise the forehead immediately after placing it.

Between The Two Prostrations

(i) On rising from the first prostration sit down calmly and then make the second prostration. It is sinful to make the second prostration after just raising the head without sitting down completely and it calls for repeating the prayer.

(ii) On arising from the first prostration, women must lean on the left hip and remove both feet to the right side and place the right calf on the left shin letting both hands on the thighs with their fingers drawn very close together.

(13) The palms must rest on the lap while sitting down.

(14) They must sit at least as long as it takes to say *sub-ḥā-nal-lāh* once. However, it is better to sit as long as it takes to recite اَللّٰهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِيْ وَارْحَمْنِيْ وَاسْتُرْنِيْ وَاجْبُرْنِيْ وَاهْدِنِيْ وَارْفَعْنِيْ (*Al-lā-hum-magh-fir-lī warḥam-nī was-tur-nī waj-bur-nī wah-di-nī war-fa'-nī*) "O Allah! Forgive me, Have mercy on me and cover me up (my faults), Repair me (my losses), Guide me and raise me (my ranks)."

However, it is not necessary to recite this in the *farḍ* (obligatory) prayers. These may be recited in optional prayers.

The Second Prostration and Getting up From it

(i) Go on to the second prostration in the same manner as the first - place the knees on the ground first, then the nose and then the forehead.

(ii) The posture is the same as in the first prostration.

(iii) When arising: raise first the forehead, then the nose, the hands and the knees in this order.

(iv) It is better not to lean on the ground when getting straight up but if someone is heavy or ill or old and it is difficult to get up without support then it is permitted to do so.

(v) In the standing posture say the *tasmiyah* before *al-fatiha* in every *raka'ah*.

The Qa'dah or The Sitting Posture

(i) The manner of sitting in the *Qa'dah* is the same as described for sitting between two prostrations.

(ii) While reciting the *Tashahhud* raise the forefinger when you come to *ash-ha-du al-lā* and drop it at *illal-lā-hu*.

(iii) The method of raising the forefinger is to form a ring with the thumb and middle finger and close the other fingers. Then raise the forefinger so that it is bent towards the *Qiblah* not raised up towards the sky.

(iv) When the forefinger is lowered at *illal-lāh* let the other fingers remain as they were formed in a ring when

guiding the feelings. They must be kept so to the end.

ENDING THE PRAYER

(i) When turning either side while uttering the words of salutation, move the neck so much that any woman sitting behind may observe your cheek.

(ii) When the face is so turned the gaze must rest on the shoulders. At the time you have turned your neck to the right and said [illegible] *as-sa-lā-mu 'a-lai-kum wa rah-ma-tul-lāh*, "Peace be on you and the mercy of Allah."

Purpose to have saluted the angels on this side.

Similarly, when you say these words

on the left side, from the intention of greeting the angels this side.

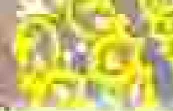
Method of Making A Supplication

The method of supplicating is to raise the hands to the chest. Keep a little distance between the two hands neither keep them together nor let them be wide apart.

The palms must be towards your face.

A Ruling: It is makrooh to have a women's congregation. It is better for them to offer prayers individually. However, if the mahram men of the family form a congregation in the home, there is no harm in women joining them. They must stand behind the men, never together.

(Adapted from: *Namaz-e-masnoon* [illegible] *with Adiyah* and *Namaz-e-masnoon* [illegible]



Āmīn

وصلى الله تعالى على النبي الكريم محمد وآله وصحبه أجمعين

wa sal-lal lā-hu ta-'ā-lā 'a-lan na-biy-yil ka-rīm mu-ham-ma-dinw wa 'ā-li-hī wa as-hā-bi-hī aj-ma-'īn

Blessings of Allah be on the noble Prophet, Muhammad, and his family and companions-all of them.

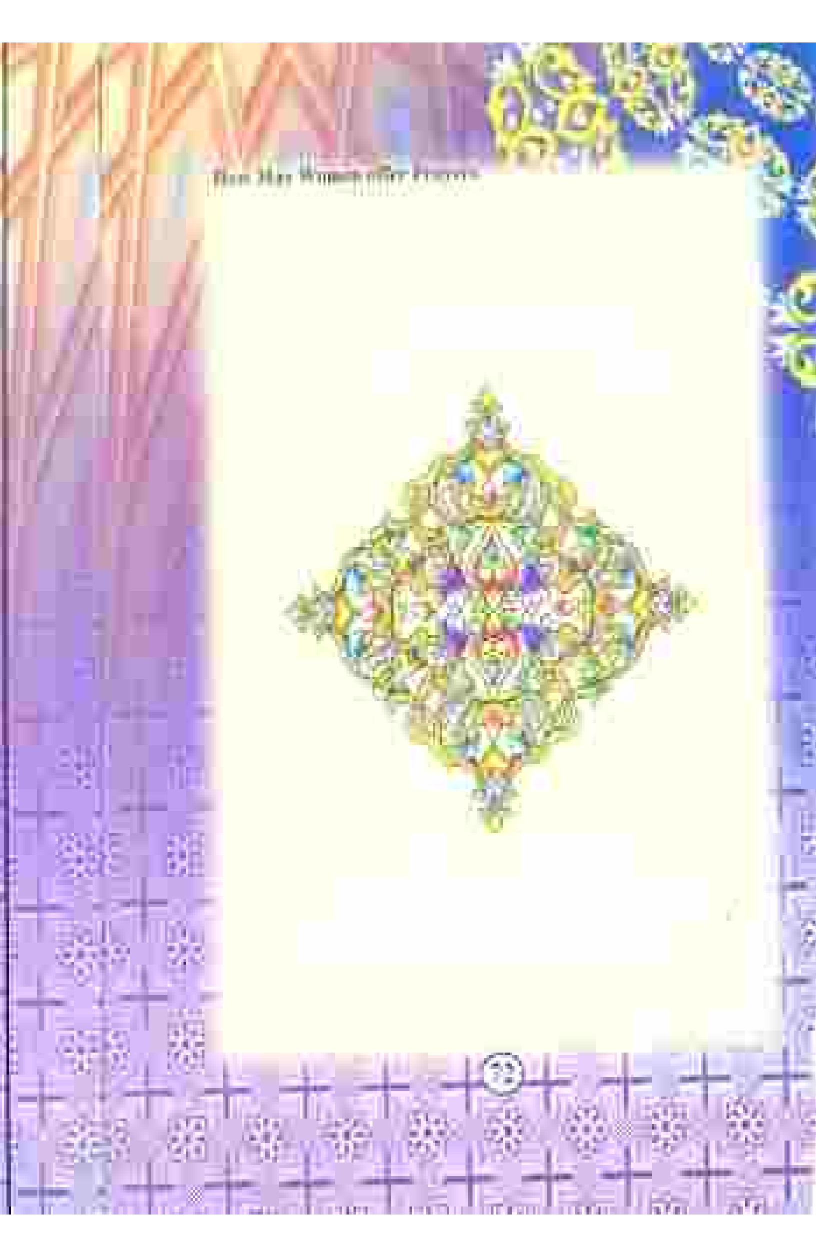
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